POLAND: Strike Winding Down

The printers apparently were in a militant mood, but most of them ended the newspaper strike yesterday after Solidarity chief Walesa met with workers in Warsaw and persuaded them to return to work. ██████

A union spokesman claimed that before Walesa's intervention in Warsaw, more than two-thirds of the printers in the main publishing house favored continuing the strike. While heeding Walesa's call to work, they reportedly have pledged to strike again in three weeks if the government fails to make concessions to Solidarity's demands for greater access to the media. ██████

This threat may be largely a face-saving gesture. Such a strike would interfere with Solidarity's congress, but it would keep pressure on the government and the union leadership. ██████

Printers in Lodz may still be on strike, keeping their vow to block newspaper publication until Walesa receives television time to respond to the regime's criticism of Solidarity. ██████

Soviet and East German media have given brief coverage to the strike. The absence of more extensive criticism in the USSR and Eastern Europe suggests uncertainty over how to deal with the sensitive issue of party control of the press raised by the printers. ██████

Soviet Lecturer's Comments

A lecturer in Moscow, presumably reflecting party guidance, warned on Tuesday that the situation in Poland could lead to "civil war," but implied that his audience should expect no early end to the crisis. When asked if Soviet troops were supporting the Polish Government, he responded that in the current "delicate" circumstances, even the use of Polish troops would be risky. ██████████ ██████████████ the lecturer twice quoted Polish party leader Kania on the seriousness of the situation; he made no reference, however, to the Polish party's efforts to deal with it——an omission that suggests skepticism as to the efficacy of such efforts. ██████████

287